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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2007

## Les Miles Conversation with Mary Sue Coleman and Bill Martin

The conversation on Sunday night between Les Miles, Mary Sue Coleman, and Bill Martin went something like this:

*Setting:*

*Les Miles in Baton Rouge on the phone. Bill Martin at Mary Sue's home on South University. Mary Sue and Bill are sitting around a walnut table with the conference phone in the middle of the table.*

**BM:** Les, thanks for calling. I've been taking a hell of a lot of crap up here because your boys are all saying that we're not interested. You even had Bill McCartney come out and say that he couldn't believe we weren't considering you for the job. Now, Les, I want you to know that we did consider you in our pool of candidates. Les, you know Bo put a premium on Michigan Men. Hell, he fired Bill Frieder when Bill took the ASU job on the eve of the NCAA tourney. You know, we did ok with that one Les.

**MSC:** Les, I felt it important for me to get directly involved at this point. We've got a lot of important alumni, most football players under Bo, and a lot of offensive linemen from the research we've done. And, Les you were, what a left guard, I think. Right?

**Les:** Ms. Coolmmman. I have a damn strong football team. I was a damn strong lineman for the University of Michigan. Bo was my mentor. I mean, ya know, Bo and I go way back. We were like this (crossing fingers). You know I've alwayz, alwayz Mary Sue wanted this job. It's my dream job.

**MSC:** Well Les, we've got a problem up here. You were on our list. Les, you were in the top 5. Bill, Lloyd and I compiled a list last summer. In July, Lloyd came to us shortly after he told Laurie he thought he was done. You know, Les, Lloyd actually mentioned to us about a year and a half ago that he thought he was ready to retire, but we talked him out of it. And, it wasn't that hard, because Lloyd has really developed a bond with those kids. Jake, Chad, Hart. I've met those kids, Les, and they've

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received quite an education here at Michigan. We're proud of that, Les. And we know you would be, too.

**BM:** And, Les, we know that you understand a good education. Les, you obtained a fabulous education at this academic institution. Hell, Les, you got a degree in economics. Now, I'm kind of partial to that degree, I mean I'm a business guy. I respect econ majors. And, I know that you took some english classes here also, Les, we've checked your Michigan records here and you did well by yourself, Les. Those classes obviously worked out for you because you have very carefully chosen your words Les. We thought we'd lost you for good when you said you'd be in Louisiana next year. But then you came back again, and again begging for the job, even after your team was prepping for the championship. Frankly, Les, I was surprised. I thought you were more of a meathead than a linguist, Les. You know I only met you once. But it turns out you've managed to really put the pressure on us.

**Les:** I've got a damn strong ball team, Bill! I am a MEEEECHIGAN MAN. I was Bo's brainchild. I am the damn strongest football coach east of the Mississippi, and it's time for me to come home.

**BM:** Les, we know your love for the UM is true. Sincere. We know that you are, as Skip said, more noble than most coaches (at least Louisiana coaches) but we knew that you wanted this job more than anything else.

**Les:** Damned strong, Bill. Damned Noble!

**BM:** Well, as I said during our coaching search, we've done some research on our candidates. Well, Les, candidly, it's been more than some research in your case. We were a little surprised by your early and constant campaigning for the job. And, Mary Sue and I haven't been impressed with your slights on Lloyd after the 2005 season. Les, I want you to know why we called. We've reached out to you today, because, even after the SEC championship victory and your championship game coming up, you haven't let up on your campaign. If nothing else, you are persistent.

**MSC:** We've had enough Les. We were willing to let you take the spotlight for a time. But, Les, you knew we didn't want you. You knew that because we hadn't called. Bill and I have been working on a very short list since last August. And, it's time for us to move on and move beyond the Les in 08 campaign. And, now, Les, this has gone on too long. It's time to stop. Your campaign has caused Bill a lot of pressure. He's waves pretty well, Les. But, I've had enough of it.

**Les:** It's my time. Time to come home. Hell, Mary, my wife has been looking for houses for a month now. We've got one all picked out in Barton Hills. I don't care about the money. I'll take 2.5. Just give me leeway on my coaches, no supervision by Lloyd and I'll be here.

**MSC:** Les this isn't about money. It isn't about Lloyd. Lloyd hasn't said a bad word about you.

**BM:** But she did ask me to be sure to conduct an extensive background check, Les. I mentioned that during Lloyd's press conference, Les. Did you see that?

**Les:** Live, Bill. You said my damned strong team was 11-1.

**MSC:** Les, about that background search. Well, we turned up quite a bit. And we've put together a press release which we'll be putting out at a brief press conference we've tentatively scheduled for Tuesday afternoon. Now our background on you was extensive. And we found some things, well some personal things that were surprising. But, that's not the real issue. We have no desire to hurt you, Les. We didn't want it to come to this. We thought you'd let it go. Well, we hoped so. Anyway,

BUSTED!

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Les, here's what we've got.

**BM:** When you were coaching against Stoops over there in the Big 12, you had a good record, Les. But you didn't even have your kids go to class. After you left, OK State cleaned house, including cutting players you recruited. That's unusual, Les. And we talked to those players. We talked to some professors at Okie State. And what we found was not pretty, Les.

**Les:** I have a damn strong commitment to my players Maay Sue. I love this team. I am a damn strong coach of the damndest strongest football team in this county, Mary Sue. I am a Michigan Man. I am the Michigan Man that Bo wanted to succeed him at this damn fine institution. Mary Sue, I assure you that I can teach smarts. Had that tight end of yours been coached by me, in the mold of Bo Schembechler, my idol, he wouldn't have run out of bounds in that Alamo Bowl. He would have known and understood that he was a damn strong tight end on the damndest strongest football team in the county, and he would have run his damn fine ass off and pitched that ball to Breaston before he ran out of bounds.

**BM:** Well, that's football smart Les. That's important but, I think Mary Sue and I had something else. . . . anyway, Les we already knew about all the academic problems at OSU. And that alone really sealed the deal for us, Les. A true Michigan Man wouldn't have allowed his players to not attend any classes, to cheat and have fill ins take tests. At Michigan, Les, we pride ourselves on getting kids an education. Something to fall back on in case they don't make the NFL.

**MSC:** Les, I've got to tell you I was shocked. I don't know what life is like in Stillwater, but I just cannot imagine not requiring players to attend class. Lloyd told me that you were a basically good man. A little aggressive, and not really into detail, like having guys attend class, but a good man. But he also said once you set your mind to something you're a bulldog, Les. And we knew that a press release with academic scandal alone might not be enough to call off the hounds. Some people already knew that about that deal.

**BM:** But, ya know, Les, you kept campaigning for the job, as though it's a right of yours to occupy the head coaching position at the this University, Bo's alma mater, and the winningest program of all time. All time, Les. With a squeaky clean history. Sqweekky Clleeeeen. We've managed to uphold that tradition of academic and athletic excellence, Les, without any problems. No investigations. Nada, zilch, zippoo.

**MSC:** Well, Les, we just couldn't put up with anymore. So, Bill, door number 2?

**BM:** We've done a lot of talking about you over the last year and a half. We know all about your transgressions at Michigan. We know things not even Lloyd or Bo knew about. That's one thing about wanting to come back, Les. We've got a lot of resources closeby. You bit a guy's ear off in bar fight, Les. We know you had a propensity to hit on college girls while you were here. We know that you liked to drink a lot. All of this, you know is nothing to stop you from being a viable candidate, Les. You're not running for President. And, you're entitled to make mistakes, especially when you're young. The time that you were a GA here, we really didn't let that weigh on our decision here.

**MSC:** Bill, door number 3?

**BM:** Now, we're getting to the good stuff, Les. When you left Michigan for Colorado with Bill McCartney in 1982 things up there in Boulder started to get out of hand. Les, some of the things I've heard about that happened up there are, well, to put in mildly Les, just despicable. And that police unit you guys set up out there in Boulder to cover up the

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transgressions of your players, Les? Well?

**Les:** I've got a damned strong football team down here in Baattooon Ruuujje. We've got a chance to win the whole thing.. And, I'm a Bo Schembechler prodigy. I'm the heir apparent of that damn fine football coach that passed away last year.

**BM:** But Les, our background turned up more than just your time at Colorado. We know that when you came back to Ann Arbor, there were rumblings about you. About Gary. And, well, you know what happened to Gary. Too much time partying. Too much time drinking. I liked Gary. A personable fellow. You know, Les, there are two thing about you and Mo that remind me of one another: you both talk a lot of nonsense, and neither one of you could manage a game clock, but that's only an aside. You've won everywhere you've been. And I know that's the only important thing at most schools.

**MSC:** And, as much as Bill wants to hire a winner Les, I just can't get over all these things that came up in your background. Can you explain any of this?

**Les:** Mary, you see, I grew up with Bo. Football is everything to me. I will make this University proud. I will beat that team down in Columbus. I live and breathe football, Mary. That's the bottom line. And, I've developed a damn strong team down here in Baattooon Ruuujje that's going to win that championship trophy over that school down south.

**BM:** Well Les, you know when I took over, I knew who you were. I've followed Michigan football forever, Les. And, I know that you revere this University. And that you revered Bo. And, when I first learned that Lloyd was considering retiring a two years ago, I considered you the best candidate for the job. But I didn't know everything, Les. For instance, I didn't know that you and Bob Simmons, who coached with you and McCartney out there in Boulder, took the same escapades you developed in Boulder to Stillwater. A lot of what went down out there in Boulder and Stillwater got back to Bo. I didn't know that Bo had told Lloyd that you were never to coach here.

**MSC:** Les, when I learned about that Oklahoma State rape in 99 I was sick. Sick. I know you were with the Dallas Cowboys when that girl got raped by four football players, but you know what they said Les, you and Simmons brought that culture to Stillwater from Boulder.

**Les:** Well, now you know, Mary Sue, I've got a damn fine football team here at this school I call home. It's not just fine, its a damn strong team, Mary Sue. And, I've got a chance to do something that old Bo never did. I've got a chance to win a championship, Mary.

**MSC:** Lloyd won a championship, Les. In '97. Have you?

**Les:** This year, we're going to beat those damn Buckeyes, Mary Sue. I know you want to beat those Buckeyes. Some day, Mary Sue with the right coach back in charge this great University will beat that school from down south.

**MSC:** We want to win it Les. That is the goal at the beginning of every football season. And Bill and I are on the same page on this, we expect to compete for the big 10 title every year in every sport and a national championship once every 2 or 3 years. But, at Michigan, Les, we win with integrity. Integrity, Les.

**Les:** You've heard Bertman. I am a noble man, Mary Sue. Nobler than most!

**BM:** Maybe so, maybe for the SEC. Those guys down there are rampant about their football. Maybe your LSU players can get away

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with not going to class down there, but here, Les? No.

**MSC:** I know Betsy Hoffman. She was a colleague of mine. Did you know that she lost her presidency at Colorado in 2007? Do you know why?

**Les:** No idddee. Mary Sue. Did the football team not win enough games?

**MSC:** She resigned because the school did not closely enough monitor its football program, Les. You know, Betsy told me the problems at CU went all the way back to McCartney's hire there. And that tradition you and McCartney set up in Boulder and which went unchecked by Nieuheisel ended up costing the football coach, athletic director, and even the president their jobs over in CU. It's no secret, Les.

**BM:** Les, we can't and won't let that happen here. We've already endured a fiasco with our basketball program, as you know. That will not happen here again, Les. You know, I know Steve Fisher. I know Bill Frieder. Bill was a character, as you know, Les. And Fish, well, he won a championship for us, before my time. But, the scandal that arose during Fish's tenure cost the basketball program, the athletic department, and this University far more than that championship brought us -- in both prestige and dollars.

**MSC:** We're just not convinced that you're the right man for this job. Some of these things, maybe you've outgrown them. But, we're not comfortable with it. We're willing to do this one of two ways. You're a Michigan Man, Les. And up here, we have respect for that term. Bill?

**BM:** Les, here it is: You're not going to be the next Michigan coach. You will never be the Michigan coach as long as Mary Sue or I have any power here. But your commitment and devotion to this University must be respected. And, as much as Mary Sue and I despise your campaign for this job, we are going to let you tuck your tail between your legs, and head on back to LSU. We won't bring up this investigation. We won't make any references to your time in Colorado or OK State. And we won't bring up anything about your recruiting tactics at LSU. You can go on ESPN Tuesday, and announce that you have withdrawn your name from consideration for the head coach of the University of Michigan. And, Les, you will call off the campaign. Call off the dogs.

**MSC:** Or, Les, we will hold a press conference on Tuesday afternoon. At that press conference Bill will identify the reasons that we have removed you as a candidate. We don't want to do that, Les. But we will if you don't take care of this.

POSTED BY WOLVERINE STEVE AT 10:38 PM

LABELS: BILL MARTIN, COACHES, LES MILES, MARY SUE, MICHIGAN FOOTBALL

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